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S E R M O N

P R E A C H E D

U P O N T H E

Fifth of November,

I 6 7 8.

By a Protestant Divine.
John Williams D.D. afterwards bp. of Chichester.



L O N D O N :

Printed for *Dorman Newman*, at the *Kings-Arms* in
the *Poultry*, I 6 7 8.



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PSAL. LXXXIII. 3, 4.

*They have taken crafty counsel against thy people,
and consulted against thy bidden ones: They have
said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a
Nation, that the name of Israel be no more in re-
membrance.*



HIS Psalm may either refer to some particular time, when the Land of *Israel* had War with, and was invaded by the *Edomites*, *Ismaelites*, and the other Nations spoken of here, *ver. 6, 7, 8*; as it was in the Reign of *David*, *2 Sam. 8. 1, &c.* and *Jehosaphat*, *2 Chron. 20. 1, 10.* Or else it may be applied to the condition of the *Jews* with respect to the several enemies which they had from time to time, to the Captivity. At which time especially we find the *Amonites* and *Moabites*, the *Edomites* and *Philistins*, in *Ezek. 25*, with those of *Tyre*, *chap. 26*, to have been sworn enemies to the welfare of *Israel*, and to have rejoiced in the destruction and captivity of that people. Upon which of these occasions this Psalm was

penned, it is not so fit to determine, as it is to observe the lively representation that is here made of the enmity which the wicked do bear to the Church and people of God ; and of the need which the Church hath of, and of the protection it finds by the Divine Providence.

The *Jews* were a typical people, an emblem of what the Church was like to be, and of what it was like to meet with in future ages. They were seldom or never without enemies, and those enemies never without mischievous designs, which they laid with great cunning, and prosecuted with all their might ; but they were also never without a defence, and with which they were always safe. The enemies might advise and conspire, confederate, assemble and joyn together ; they might proceed, and promise themselves success in their design ; but as long as *Israel* was the Church of God, it was safe : and as till it needed persecution, it should be preserved from it ; so till it deserved it, should never be forsaken. This is the account which the *Psalmist* gives of the state of that Church with respect to its enemies that sought to destroy it, and with respect to God, who took care to preserve it.

In the Words we have,

1. An evil design laid and contrived, which was to destroy the people of God ; *They have taken counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.*

2. Their

2. Their Confederacy in this design ; *They have said, come, and let us cut them off.* So again, *vers. 5, They have consulted together with one consent : they are confederate against thee.*

3. The success which they promised themselves in it ; *Come, and let us cut them off* ; as if it was what they could as soon do as say ; what they could not be opposed or prevented in.

Accordingly I shall shew,

1. That the wicked do bear an enmity to the Church of God, and seek the destruction of it. Where I shall consider whence that doth proceed.

2. In what ways they do shew this enmity, and what course they take to afflict and destroy the Church.

3. The confidence which they have of success.

4. By way of Supplement, I shall shew by what ways their designs may be prevented, and their enterprizes overthrown.

First, I shall consider the enmity which the wicked bear to the Church of God, and from whence that doth proceed.

When we consider what the Church of God is, and of what excellent persons its Family doth consist, and by what excellent Rules it is ordered, we may think it as safe from all outward violence, as from any inward distemper ; and that it should not find any enemies, since it doth not by any just invitations make them. *From whence come wars and fightings among you ? Come*

they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust and have not: ye kill and desire to have.

James 4. 1, 2. When men do greedily desire what another doth possess, and use violence to thrust him out of his right that they themselves may enjoy it: when they do envy the good of others, and do maliciously endeavour to supplant them in it: when they do seek to revenge themselves upon those that have done them a real injury, or that have prevented them from doing it to another; they grow quarrellous and contentious, and fill the World with divisions and strifes, hatred and variance, blood and slaughter. But now when men are meek and peaceable, when they are not forward to do any wrong to others, and backward to resent what they receive from them; one would think that they are as secure from receiving, as they are above the design of doing any hurt; as the Apostle saith, *1 Pet. 3. 13, Who will harm you if ye be followers of that which is good?* This is indeed often the reward of meekness, and modesty, of integrity and faithfulness, of justice and honesty, of goodness and piety, that it gains the good will and the good word of others, and procures peace and safety to those that practise it. But yet it is no rare thing for the best of men, and the best Religion in the World to meet with fierce oppositions and sharp persecutions. An instance of which is the people of *Israel*, who were continually practised upon, invaded and assaulted by those that were their neighbours. We find
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that no tie or obligation could secure them against, or engage others to be for them, but that they watched and took all advantages to surprize, to spoil and to ruin them. Some of these nations spoken of in this *Psalm*, had more reason to be their Friends than their Enemies. The *Ismaelites* descended directly from *Abraham*, and the *Hagarens* are supposed to be his posterity also by *Keturah*, whom some think to have been *Hagar* that he took again after *Sarah's* death. The *Moabites* and *Ammonites* were the off-spring of *Lot*. The *Edomites* sprung from *Esau* the brother of *Jacob*: And which three last, besides this relation by blood, had a particular reason to forbear all Acts of Hostility, as they were not disturbed by the *Israelites* when they passed by them into *Canaan*, Deut. 2. 5, 9. The rest of them were such whom *Israel* did not disturb or invade, unless when invaded, contenting themselves with what was given them by the decree, and order, and appointment of God. But it is not always quietness and innocency that are a sufficient protection; even that, when nothing else can be the foundation of a quarrel, shall serve to make it. So that the Church may be persecuted without fault, and may fare ill, not because it is worse, but better than those it receives injury from: and that will appear if we consider from whence this doth proceed.

1. This proceeds from the craft and policy, the malice and spite of the Devil, who being a competitor with God for dominion in the World, and whose

whose whole design it is to defeat him in the good that he would do for mankind, doth perpetually labour to put a stop to whatever may be offered toward the delivering of the Souls of men out of his snare. How doth he triumph in being *the god of this World*, and in the success that he hath upon poor and miserable mortals; most of whom he hath in all ages made his tributaries and vassals; and by whom he was so generally served and obeyed, that it was but in a spot of the earth that God was truly worshipped, a Country not above 200 miles in length, and 80 in breadth. So *Psal. 147. 19, 20*, *He sheweth his word unto Jacob: his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation, and as for his judgments they have not known them.* Whatever good men might be scattered through the World, and however Religion might be preserved in some particular Families and Tribes of other nations, (as it was in that of *Job* and his friends) yet there was no intire nation that kept up the Religion of the only true God, besides that of the *Jews*. When mankind had basely degenerated, and the state of the World grew worse and worse, God chose out the people of *Israel* for his peculiar service; and as for other ends, so to be an instrument of winning others over to the same practice. This people he separated from the rest of the World; and by his dealings with them, in dividing the Seas, piercing the Rocks, destroying the nations for them, and preserving them when threatned with
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the greatest dangers, so that no violence could hurt them, nor power dispossess them, nor any thing destroy them but their sins; by these and the like ways he made them conspicuous to the Nations far and near, and put such upon enquiring whence all this should proceed. and so at length they might be won to own the same God, and put themselves under his protection. So *Deut.* 4. 6, *Keep therefore and do them [my statutes] for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of all the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.* So *Vers.* 32. 33, 34. and *Chap.* 26. 18, 19.

And when God had so visibly separated a people to himself from all the World, and that by such eminent tokens of his presence with them, he had made them and himself known to the World, it was no wonder that the Devil set himself with all his might to prevent this growing-danger that threatned his Kingdom, and to provide that his dominions which he had kept hitherto intire to himself, might not be invaded; and what he had usurped might not be wrested out of his hands; Nothing should in such a case be wanting on his part that either his wit could invent, or his power perform; and so without doubt he did stir up enemies to assault, vex and destroy them. And he that did thus bestir himself in the first settlement of a National Church, cannot be thought to have forgot himself or to neglect his cause so far, as not to use an industry great and sufficient

in proportion to the danger that was approaching; when no less a design was set on foot than of bringing the whole world into the same condition, and making all mankind to adore the King of kings, and Lord of lords in the same way. When this design was laid, and such a power appeared in its behalf, as threw him out of his Empire in a shameful way, and tore up the foundations of it; we may suppose that he would bend all his forces that way, and that all his Crew would take up Arms to oppose whatever was like to procure the total overthrow of that Empire he had so long enjoyed. Then the gates of Hell, all the power and policy of it, would combine against the Church which Christ established so much to the prejudice of the Devils dominion. It's said *Revel. 12. 12, 13. Wo to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the Sea: for the Devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the Dragon saw that he was cast out unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child.* He that prided himself before in the extent of his dominions and numbers of his Subjects, being deprived of that Supremacy, breaks forth into the greatest rage against all the deserters of his government, and seeks to destroy those whom he could not retain and keep firm to him. And this is one cause why the Church of God meets with opposition and persecution, as the Devil is concerned in the quarrel, and doth instigate bad men to manage and to carry it on.

Secondly,

Secondly, It proceeds from the restless temper of wicked men, whose minds are set upon mischief and that do catch at all opportunities for it. It is said of such, *Prov. 1. 16*, that *their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood*. And *Chap. 4. 16, 17*. *They sleep not except they have done mischief: and their sleep is taken away unless they cause some to fall. For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence*. Wherefore they are fitly compared to *the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt*. *Isaiah 57. 20*.

When sin hath erected its Empire, and come to be predominant, it then becomes an interest; and the heart of man which of it self is perpetually in motion, will then, being made a party, move strongly in its desires and designs that way which by such a depraved temper it is directed to. It's always then prepared for action; and as it is habitually disposed, so being awakened by the least occasion, it presently is all on fire, and engages in the quarrel. It will then appear in the Cause of Sin, and fight its battels; and whatever doth obstruct and oppose it, shall be looked upon and dealt with as an Enemy. This doth all sin more or less wherever it is. But there are some sinners that from their own natural temper, or their manner of life, are more unquiet than others, and whom it's necessary for the peace and safety of the world, to find out some employment for (as they say it is for a Spirit when it is raised

by the power of charms and witchcraft) and to watch over them, or else they will be perpetually hatching and doing of mischief. Such especially are they that live in Cloysters and Frieries, that having no set and fixed employments to take up their minds, are listning to all news, greedy of understanding the state of affairs, prying into every ones concerns, busying themselves in finding out what others think, design, or do: and therefore it is that there is no part of their office which they are so diligent in, and expert at, as that of hearing confessions; This they can abide by all the day, when they have thereby. an opportunity of diving into the hearts, and drawing out the secrets of others; of understanding the tempers of persons, the state of Families, Towns, and Kingdoms. These are very dangerous persons wherever they do reside. It's such as these that will not suffer Princes or People to be quiet (where they are admitted and indulged) but are perpetually instigating them, and putting them forward upon dangerous enterprizes. These, that pretend to be under an Obligation not to divulge the secrets of Confession (although a Prince, and Parliament, and thousands of People suffer by the concealment of it, as it had likely to have proved in the *Gunpowder-Treason*) make their advantage of these to breed ill blood, to foster and promote jealousies and contentions betwixt Prince and people, betwixt Nation and Nation, that their Cause may be promoted by it, and by this means others may
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be made unable to hurt them, or defend themselves. It's but fit therefore, since such have chosen the life of a Cloyster, that they should be confined to it, or else they are enough to set all the World on fire, and to draw men into perpetual quarrels and contentions. These are they that keep the Church from being quiet, and Christians from the practice of those duties that tend to the peace, the order, and the security of it.

3. It proceeds from the interest of wicked men, as it is *Vers. 3.* *They have consulted against thy hidden ones,* or as צפונייה is rendred *Psalms 17. 14.* *Thy treasures.* So *Vers. 12.* *They say, let us take to our selves the houses* [or ornaments] *of God in possession.* The riches of the Temple, amongst other things, did, it seems, invite their avarice. And this is frequently a reason of the enmity of such. The Church may either have somewhat which they want; or else if it should prevail, deprive them of somewhat which they have, and so gives therefore sufficient ground of a quarrel. The Apostle tells us of some men, *whose God is their belly, and that mind earthly things,* Phil. 3. 19. and of others, *whose gain is godliness,* 1 Tim. 6. 5, that are no further for Religion than Religion is for them, and make use of that Sacred Name to obtain or secure their secular interest; and if this be opposed, Hell it self shall be moved, and all that power and policy can do, imployed to protect it. Religion it self shall be abandoned, and the Church of God harassed and persecuted, if they make against it.

This

This is one great reason of the quarrel betwixt us and the Church of *Rome*, and of all those attempts made upon us by a Foreign Power. *England* is a fruitful Country, and the people, of their own temper, inclined to devotion; and it was a plentiful harvest which some men reaped here in former times from *Peter-pence*, and first-Fruits, and Pensions, and Appeals, and Dispensations, and Indulgences, and Jubilees, and Pilgrimages; they were goodly days when there were frequent returns in these kinds from hence to *Rome*: but now that there is a great Gulph fixed, by Laws and Statutes and Penalties, betwixt us and them, so that they which would pass from hence to them cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence about such affairs without danger, whilst those Laws are in being, and are put in execution; their bank is sunk, and they would fain be returning to their old quarter. There are *Abbies*, and *Monastries*, *Frieries* and *Nunneries*, with noble Mannors and large *Demefnes*; there are Benefices and Colledges which they thirst after. These are the Souls that they so dearly prize and venture so hard to rescue out of the fire; these are the *Profelytes* which they above all labour to gain: and because they are still kept out, what broils and stirs do they make? what do they not threaten and endeavour? And besides, there is danger, lest if they invade not us, that we should grow upon them, and other people begin to be wise as well as ours. Such also may come to see that Religion consists

consists not in the visiting of a Church, or looking devoutly upon a *Relique*, or kissing a piece of wood, or bowing to an Image, or crossing the breast, or in fingring of Beads, or saying Prayers by tale, or being clad with the Robe of *St. Francis*, or walking barefoot, or in being all night locked up in a Cloyster, or in fasting by eating of Fish, or in lighting up of Tapers, and making processions, and a thousand of the like apish and fantastical Ceremonies; nay, they might come to understand, that the *Pope* is not Christs Vicar, nor his Holiness Infallible; nor that he hath power to deliver Souls out of Purgatory; and what is more, that there is no such place as Purgatory, and so no need of praying for the dead, nor of Money to purchase those prayers. This is a great reason why our Religion in the Church of *England*, which is a Reformation of those corrupt errors and practices that are crept into the Church of *Rome*, is so much disliked and inveighed against by the *Popish* faction. For what would *Rome* signify if it had no supremacy over other Churches? what appeals would be made thither? what directions, commands and grants would be expected thence, if each had as much authority within it self, as that now claims over all? if the rest of the Apostles had authority equal with *St. Peter*; if all their successors in the several parts of the World, were of the same degree, and none had superiority over the rest; if the Church of *Ephesus* where *St. John* was, or that of *Jerusalem* where *St.*

James

James did preside, had as much priviledge as that of *Rome*, then she might sit as a widow in respect of what for these last ages she hath been, and be bereaved of all that Pomp and Greatness, that Wealth and Magnificence that she hath abounded in.

Again, if there be no infallibility amongst them, if their *Popes* have mistaken in point of faith, and their decrees have been erroneous; if their Councils have miscarried in their determinations; if Tradition hath failed in what they pretend to be conveyed down by it; if their Church, that is, be no better than others; and whatever it pretends to, can really claim no better infallibility; Then what need will there be of being solicitous and inquisitive about what she shall require or determine? what need any one take a long journey thither, when he may with greater ease and as much certainty have his case resolved at home? Could that Church do no more than others, and had it no such thing as a treasure of Merits and Superarogaions, no publick and general stock from whence such may be relieved as having made little conscience of Religion whilst they lived, have no other claim to the priviledges of it when they come to dye; where would be the profit that doth daily accrue to it by the issuing out of Indulgences? Were there nothing in the *Reliques* that are shewed by them, and no more in that Blood of Christ which they expose to the view and veneration of the people, than that of a Duck (as my Lord *Herbert* in his History of
Hen.

Henry the 8th. saith it was found to be) were there no more in the Stairs of *Pilate* which the people with great devotion do climb up at *Rome*, and expect great Indulgences for, than in those of an ordinary Church, who would make such tedious Pilgrimages thither? If Purgatory be yet a place to be discovered; and what there is not so much proof of, as for a World in the Moon; if the proof of it depends upon Legends and Apparitions, &c. what will become of the *Dirges* and Prayers offered for the dead, and of the Priests whose incomes much depend upon it? If their Priests can do no more than ours, and to the eye and experience of the world, make no more alteration upon the Bread and the Wine consecrated by them, than what is consecrated by us; that after all their ceremony and a-do about it, it is no other than what it was before, is of no other colour or taste, is of no more weight, and takes up no more room than before; what will become of the veneration that the Priest obtains, and the profit that he makes by it? If they can forgive sins upon no other terms than we, and repentance and amendment of life must be the condition of it, What becomes of all their Dispensations, Pardons, Penances and Indulgences? If these and the like things fail, and that they are in the same condition with other Churches, a great part of their gain and dominion is lost. And it is no wonder that they exclaim against us, that are so bold as to question and deny what they would in these and the like particulars im-

pose upon the Christian world. They do then with as great reason set themselves against us, as *Demetrius* and the Crafts-men did oppose *St. Paul* and his associates, *Acts 19. 25, Sirs, Ye know that by this craft we have our wealth.* This, this is a case puts them hard to it, and therefore they are concerned, nearly concerned to see that this Heresie spreads no further, and to root it up wherever it hath already prevailed.

4. It may proceed from the excellency of a Church, when it doth outshine them in the best and truest Perfections, and that true goodness and substantial piety is there taught and practised. When it is not taken up with little things, with imageries and fantastical appearances, but that the Religion it owns is what tends to make men better, and that they are made by it not so much Profelytes to a particular way, as to Vertue and Christianity. Give me a Religion that works this way, that we may lay hold upon, that gives such rules and directions as will abide the examination, and last throughout ages, and are of good use to the world. There are some principles which run all into Air, and carry you away till you know not where you are; that hoise a man above ground, and make him full of self-conceit; and which he is so mighty fond of, that all that are not as fanciful as himself, shall be accounted Hereticks and what not. This is too true of some amongst our selves, and it is also as true of the *Romish* Church, that talk of infallibility, infallibility, and yet the Popes
and

and their own Councils have as grossly mistaken, as those that never pretend to it ; that talk of Absolution and Indulgence, and yet mens sins are no otherwise forgiven than upon the terms of the Gospel, such as Faith, Repentance and new Obedience (as the soberer of themselves acknowledge) ; that tell of Christ's being bodily present at the Sacrament, flesh and blood as much as our selves, and yet he is no otherwise to be seen than by our plain way of Faith, unless they take fancy for another. These and the like notions are full of wind, and make their Religion look big and bulky, but its either all art, and not nature ; or, what is worse, the distemper and not the constitution of it : It's a Religion so far of their own making, and which is made to serve an interest. But now if a Church is plain in its Doctrine, grave in its Directions, substantial in its Principles, and what drive at present practice (as these of ours do), it shall be struck at by these kind of *Hectors*; and if they could, banished out of the world.

5. It may proceed from the disposal of Divine Providence, that for the punishing of the sins of a Church, doth not only suffer others to afflict her, but turn their displeasure that way. When the heart is of it self bent upon mischief, and full fraught with evil and pernicious inclinations and designs, God may make use of that temper for the serving of his own Providence, and may direct it as he pleaseth without being guilty of the sin of it. So *Psal.* 105. 25, *He turned their heart to hate*

his people, to deal subtilly with his servants. Their heart before was corrupt and mischievous, and he made use of it for the serving of his own design; He doth not infuse this into such, or necessitate them by any absolute decree or act of his own to be ambitious, or proud, or covetous, or cruel, but it is what he finds; and the direction of it to such objects, doth no more make him the Author of it, than that person that divides and directs the Stream, can be the maker of it. It is what he finds to his hands, and what he doth only order and dispose of.

And thus much is intimated in the phrase used in Scripture of *stirring up an adversary*. God by his disposal ordering and directing the inclinations of men that were before in the heart, according as time and occasion requireth. This is plain in what is said, *1 Kings 11. 14, The Lord stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite, he was of the Kings seed in Edom.* Hadad being beaten out of his Country by David, and forced to take shelter under the King of Egypt, did doubtless wait an opportunity of returning, and yet notwithstanding, we had nothing of any attempts made by him that way till the latter end of Solomon (to whom God had promised a peaceable reign, as long as he continued to serve him) when *his wives had turned away his heart after other gods, vers. 4.* and then Hadad is said to have desired Pharaoh's leave to depart, *vers. 21.* God then making use of the settled inclinations

tions of his mind, in punishment to Solomon for his Apostacy. So God is said to *send the Assyrian*, Isa. 10. 5, 6. His pride and vain glory, were what did engage him to invade the dominions of others, *vers. 7. 8, It is in his heart to destroy, and cut off nations not a few. For he saith, are not my Princes altogether Kings?* And God served himself of this temper of his, and turned him upon *the people of Gods wrath*, as the Children of Israel are there called. So he is said to *bring Nebuchadnezzar against them*, Jer. 25. 9. So that a Church and people may come thus to suffer through Gods wise and powerful ordination, as they by their sins have provoked him to anger; and when it hath done this work, and served this end, and that by it they are brought to repentance, the same hand that brought it on will carry it off.

2. I shall proceed to the second general, which is to observe the ways in which they shew this enmity, or the course which they take for the destruction of the Church; and that is, deep consultation and joynt endeavour, *They take crafty counsel, and are confederate.*

And this is the most likely way to accomplish a design, when it is cunningly contrived, and closely prosecuted. For all the action in the world, without good consultation, may be baffled and disappointed; and the shrewdest consultation without vigorous action will come to nothing; but when both these do meet, it hath the fairest hopes of success. And this the Ad-

versaries

versaries of the Church are not wanting in, who do too often surmount in both, those that have the best cause, and whose greatest interest it is to defend it. But there are particular ways which such do take. As,

1. Slandering their adversaries, and raising false reports of them. They are then dealt with as the primitive Christians were by their persecutors, who were dressed up in the skins of such Creatures as would the more exasperate and invite the wild beasts to which they were exposed, to tear and devour them; they shall be represented as Hypocrites and Deceivers, as Hereticks and Infidels, as pernicious and dangerous. So it was with the Christians of old, who were said to be *Atheists* and contemners of all Religion, and guilty of the foulest crimes, as Sacrilege, Sedition, Incest and Murder; and it is no wonder when thus represented, that some of the best of the Heathenish Emperers made Laws and Edicts against them, and followed them with severe persecutions, as *Trajan*, *Adrian*, and *Antoninus*, till they were made to understand better by their *Apolo- gists*. And so it happens often in the World, that Religion for want of being understood, and the Religious for want of being truly known, are evil intreated by them that mean well. But as such by mistake and misreport may become Enemies to what is good, thinking it to be evil; so bad men are willing to have it so, and do therefore take all occasions to asperse Religion, that they may expose that and those that are better than

than themselves to obloquy and reproach ; for by how much the more they can cast dirt upon them, by so much the more do they think themselves vindicated. And this is no small artifice of the Church of *Rome*, in the foul dealing which they shew to those that will not own its authority, and submit to its unlimited Jurisdiction ; they will take Hell it self for calumnies, and say any thing that will serve to disgrace them. They will dress them up as the poor people that are condemned for Heresie by the Inquisition, in *Sanbenito's* and Coats painted over with Owls and Devils, to make them ridiculous or worse, and to take the people off from condoling their misfortune ; they will describe their adversaries in Characters of blood and foot, and what not, to set the people on with fury, and render them implacable. Thus we find they did by *Luther*, whom they will needs have to dye, just when he had entertained his Friends with merry conceits, and had been entertained at a plentiful Supper, and that immediately his Soul was carried away by Devils ; when the truth is, that after he had been long troubled with a pain in his breast, and was brought by it under great weakness, he was in continual expectation of death ; (though he ceased not to Preach as he had any intermission) and the night that he died, though weak, yet set down with his Friends, discoursing about the state in Heaven, and whether we shall then know one another ; and then retiring, according to his custom, to private Prayer, he found

found that his pain increased; and perceiving, after some hours, that his end drew near, he exhorted his Friends, and declared his perseverance in the Faith; and praying with great fervency, concluded that and his life together, with, *Father into thy hands I commit my spirit ; thou hast redeemed me, O God of truth.*

So they tell us that *Calvin* was given to gluttony and *Epicurism*, and was branded for Sodomy at *Noviodunum*, where he was born ; whereas he was a man of great abstinence, never eating any thing for Ten years before his death till evening ; and is cleared of the latter by *Jacob le Vasseur* Dean of *Noviodunum*, in his Book which he published of the Annals of that Church in 1633. Thus would they make our Religion and all that profess it, look miscreantly in the eyes of the world, that they might fall on us without mercy, and worry us with some reputation.

2. By dividing the Church, and setting one part of it against the other. It's the policy of the Church of *Rome*, that though they have more and greater divisions amongst them, as about the seat of infallibility it self (which is a fundamental principle with them) than we, yet that there is a superiour power to crush them; and though they cannot be reconciled and put to an end, yet that that puts them to silence, and so they are kept from doing mischief. But where persons have a free liberty, and few or no restraints laid upon them, they are tempted to break into parties, and those parties

ties are apt to break one against the other, by which means they are often made a prey to the common Adversary. And I pray God this be not the event of this state with us. I am sure there hath not been wanting endeavour on their part to effect it; endeavour I say, to make and aggravate and perpetuate differences, that so all might lie at their mercy. How do they sort with all persons, strike into all Societies, take upon themselves the guise of all parties, that they may bring each to war against other, and fight the battels of *Rome* whilst they fight one with the other, and all may fall a Sacrifice to its fury.

3. By downright force: that when other means do fail, or that they are weary of expecting what will be the issue of them, they do without more ado, run to their Arms, and bring the Cause to a decision in open Field. In open Field, say I, I wish that were all; nay they will assassinate and massacre, blow up or burn, or do any thing that either treachery or cruelty can teach them. This is too true a Character of the Church of *Rome*, That ever since it first drew the sword in the time of *Hildebrand*, never knew what it was to sheath it again, but that hath prosecuted it's Cause by force of Arms to this day. It's that which hath claimed a Jurisdiction over Princes, and a power to depose and dethrone them. It's that which hath disposed of their Kingdoms, and given Subjects authority to rebel against them. It's that which hath raised Armies, and animated

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Princes to head ~~them~~ against the Laws of Nations. It's to that we are beholding for 88, when with the *Popes* blessing, no less than a Fleet of 130 Ships, with 19290 Souldiers on board, besides Seamen, was sent to invade *England*, and despoil *Queen Elizabeth* of her Crown and Kingdom. But what is all this to their bloody Conspiracies! An Army cannot move without giving an Alarm, it awakens others, and puts them upon their guard; but when the malice *walks like the pestilence in darkness*, and is disguised either with the shews of friendship and peace, or else lies out of all discovery, it's far more dangerous. This makes the Church or people against whom it is designed, more secure; and the Enemy more confident of success. Which brings to the fourth general.

4. Here is the confidence that they have of success, and that may proceed from the review which they take of their own policy and strength, and from the observation which they make of the weakness of their adversaries; weak perhaps of themselves, weaker perhaps with their divisions; weak because they are secure, and not aware of an assault; and weak because they have made no provision against it. Confident again they may be of success because the design lies out of sight, and what's not easily discovered, though they are never so inquisitive; when it lies under ground in Vaults or Cellars, as it was in the *Gunpowder-Treason*; or what is so well banded together, that it cannot be well prevented, though

though never so watchful, as that in 88. Confident again they may be of success ; because it is masked and disguised, that it's carried on whilst they pretend peace, friendship, and alliance. So was the *Parisian* Massacre, Anno 1572, when under the pretence of great friendship, upon the marriage betwixt the King of Navar and Margaret sister to the King of France, the Protestants in great numbers were drawn into the City, and then above 30000 of them barbarously murdered. So it was in 88, when a peace was propounded, and Commissioners on both sides sent to treat about it, with great and solemn protestations on the Prince of Parma's side that no invasion was intended, and yet within a few days after this, the *Invincible* (as it was called) Armado set forth from Spain. So again in 1605, there were sent from the Pope orders to forbid Conspiracies against the Government, whilst at the same time the *Gunpowder-Treason* was not without his privity in agitation. Whilst these and the like arts are used, it is no wonder that they promise themselves good assurance of carrying the day, and that in good time they shall prevail over them that they have thus far blinded and infatuated. But let not him that girdeth on his harness, boast himself, as he that putteth it off ; nor talk too confidently of success, till he is sure of it. For in this case there is a promise of God that is surer than all the counsels and power of men, which is, That the gates of Hell shall never prevail against the Church ; and as God will al-

ways have a Church in the world, do men or Devils what they can ; so also a particular Church shall reap the benefit of that promise, if they take the course pointed to in this *Psalms*, which brings to the fourth General.

4. The course by which the Church and People of God may and shall be secured ; intimated here, *vers.* 1, *Keep not thou silence, O God, hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God ;* Which is fervent prayer to God, and intire dependance upon him : in sum, the behaving themselves as those that are his servants ; for then God will be their Friend, and their Patron, and they will be as secure notwithstanding the power of the enemy, as if they had no enemy to encounter, or that enemy had no power to assault them. Then they shall find that verified, which is said, *Isa.* 8. 9, 10, *Associate your selves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces, and give ear all ye of far countreys : Gird your selves, and ye shall be broken in pieces : Gird your selves, and ye shall be broken in pieces : Take counsel together, and it shall come to naught : speak the word, and it shall not stand : for God is with us.* Let us then betake our selves to this course, and engage the Divine Protection by our importunate prayers to God, and a due conformity to his commands, that we make good our profession by a suitable practice, and as much exceed our adversaries in the life and spirit of our Religion, as we do in the Purity and Principles of it ; and then we shall find, that though they may

may dig deep, their counsel shall be brought to light; though they combine together, they shall be broken; though they summon up all their force they shall be defeated, and we shall then be able to say with the Psalmist, *Psal. 118. 6, The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me.* Thus our Ancestors were delivered. *Our Fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them: They cryed unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.* And to encourage you hereunto, I shall give you a brief account of Gods great mercy to them and this Church, in the deliverance which we are this day met to commemorate, and that I shall do in the order of the Text.

Their design was to root out the *Protestant Religion*; A Religion that hath the Scriptures, and the practice of the Primitive Church to defend it; a Religion planted amongst us, with peace, and by Authority; that made not its way by blood and slaughter, by rebellion and disobedience; that was settled without any injury to the Prince, or prejudice to the people, and what did hugely tend to the security of both: A Religion that dealt candidly and fairly with those that were against it, and was never an enemy to them, till they became an enemy to it; First; by receiving and owning the Bull of Pope *Pius Quintus*, that meant no less than to depose the Queen, and turn her out of her Throne, and then practising accordingly. A Religion, that when in its own defence,

defence it had Laws against such, yet rarely put them into execution; and that notwithstanding which, many of them held Offices, and all their Estates, unless forfeited by some particular Treason. This Religion which hath so much to say for it self, and God hath so much honour, and we our comfort and salvation by; nay, this Religion which they lived so safely under, did they seek to subvert.

And that in a way so barbarous, that it wants both parallel and defence, and which the boldest of that Way cannot hear of without blushing; and howsoever they would have been in the success of it, cannot find any thing to excuse.

To Murder a King in their way, was no new case; so fell *Frederick* the second, and *Henry* the seventh, Emperors; so fell our King *John*, so fell also *Henry* the third and fourth of *France*. To Butcher a people; and without respect to Order, Age, or Sex, to fall upon them, was what the *Albigenses* felt of old, and those of *France* in the Massacre at *Merindol*, Anno 1545. and at *Paris* before spoken of, had experience of. But when Prince, Parliament, and People were to be assembled, without any regard to what they were, to blow them up all at once with Gun-powder, and scatter the limbs of 30 or 40000 persons that must then have necessarily perished by that practice, was what we are yet to find a name for, and what *Treason* and *Murder* are too soft words to express.

And

And this was **not** the Act of some rash and inconsiderate person, but what many confederated together in; not a design all on a sudden thought of, and as suddenly embraced, but what had been considered and reviewed; and advised upon; what *Flanders* and *Rome* had been consulted about, as the Transactions of *Baldwin*, *Oxen*, and *Baynham* do sufficiently witness. It was what they had spent much time and many thoughts upon, and what they therefore did promise themselves success in. And success they found, for they quickly met with an house fit for their purpose, adjoining to that of the Parliament; there they attempted to make a Myne fit for the receiving the stowage which they had provided. But the time of the Parliament's sitting came on too fast, they wanted hands, and their own hands wanted exercise in such hard labour to bring this to perfection; and here again success waited upon them, and *fortune* (which they call'd *providence*) seemed to be of their party; for the Parliament was adjourned from *February* to *November*; and they in the mean while also met with a Vault which they soon hired, and was more convenient for their purpose, as what was already fitted for them, and nearer to the place of the Parliaments convention.

The time now grew near, and they are big with expectation; the train was laid for their design in the Country as well as here, and in all parts they were ripe for action. But that which went on for so long a time

as smoothly as their hearts could wish, was all on a sudden interrupted. For ten days before (which was the same time that the Conspirators appointed to assemble) one of them doubtless by the over-ruling Providence of God, more tender-hearted than the rest, wrote a Letter to the Lord *Monteagle* to dissuade him from being present the first day of the Session.

A Letter in the reasoning of it very obscure ; but what by the fortunate interpretation of the King was found to signifie much, and proved the happy discoverer of the whole. Then as success waited before upon them, so it doth as much in the further discovery, whilst *Faux* is taken without the House (that if otherwise within, would have blown up, though not the King and Parliament, yet thousands with himself), and that the Conspirators are pursued, and taken in the Countrey, before they were known to be guilty of this horrid Treason. These and many other particulars might be observed in this Action ; but that I shall chuse to refer you for satisfaction to what hath formerly, and of late been published upon that subject, and to the Act of Parliament, appointed to be read upon this day, which follows.

Anno Tertio Jacobi Regis.

Yearly Prayers shall be made, for the delivery
of the King, &c. From the Gunpowder-
Treason.

FOr as much as Almighty God, hath in all
Ages shewed his power and mercy, in the
miraculous and gracious deliverance of his
Church; and in the Protection of Religious Kings
and States, and that no Nation of the Earth hath
been blessed with greater benefits, than this Kingdom
now enjoyeth, having the true and free profession of
the Gospel under our Most Gracious Sovereign Lord
King James; the most Great, Learned, and Religi-
ous King that ever reigned therein, enriched with
a most hopeful and plentiful Progeny, proceeding out
of his Royal Loyns, promising continuance of this
happines and profession to all posterity; the which
many malignant and devilish Papists, Jesuites, and
Seminary Priests much envying and fearing, conspi-
red most horribly, when the Kings most Excellent Ma-
jesty, the Queen, the Prince, and all the Lords Spi-
ritual and Temporal, and Commons should have been
E Assembled

Assembled in the Upper-House of Parliament upon the fifth day of November, in the Year of our Lord, 1605, Suddenly to have blown up the said whole House with Gunpowder: an invention so Inhumane, Barbarous and Cruel, as the like was never before heard of, and was, as some of the principal Conspirators thereof confess, purposely devised and concluded to be done in the said House. That where sundry necessary and Religious Laws for preservation of the Church and State were made (which they falsely and slanderously term cruel Laws) and enacted against them and their Religion; both place and persons should be all destroyed and blown up at once, which would have turned to the utter ruin of this whole Kingdom, had it not pleased Almighty God by inspiring the Kings most Excellent Majesty with a Divine Spirit to interpret some dark phrases of a Letter shewed to His Majesty, above and beyond all ordinary constructions, thereby miraculously discovering this bidden Treason, not many hours before the appointed time for the execution thereof; therefore the Kings most Excellent Majesty, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and all His Majesties faithful and loving Subjects, do most justly

justly acknowledge this great and infinite blessing to have proceeded meerly from God, his great mercy, and to his most holy name do ascribe all honour, glory, and praise; and to the end this unfeigned thankfulness may never be forgotten, but be had in a perpetual remembrance; that all ages to come may yeild praises to his Divine Majesty for the same, and have in memory this joyful day of deliverance.

Be it therefore Enacted by the Kings most Excellent Majesty, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and the Commons in this present Parliament Assembled, and by the Authority of the same, that all and singular Ministers in every Cathedral, and Parish Church, or other usual place for Common-Prayer, within this Realm of England and the Dominions of the same, shall always upon the fifth day of November say morning prayer, and give unto Almighty God thanks for this most happy deliverance, and that all and every person and persons inhabiting within this Realm of England, and the Dominions of the same, shall always upon that day diligently and faithfully resort to the Parish Church, or Chappel accustomed, or to some usual Church or Chappel where the

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said morning Prayer, Preaching or other service of God shall be used, and then and there to abide orderly and soberly during the time of the said Prayers, or Preaching, or other service of God there to be used and Ministred.

And because all and every person may be put in mind of his duty, and be then better prepared to the said holy service, be it enacted by Authority aforesaid, that every Minister shall give warning to his Parishioners publickly in the Church at Morning-Prayer the Sunday before every such fifth day of November, for the due observation of the said day, and that after morning Prayer, or Preaching upon the said fifth day of November, they read publickly, distinctly and plainly this present Act.

FINIS.



